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ABSTRACT

A program for conducting a series of adolescent group counseling sessions that focus on the problems and needs of abused adolescents is presented. The materials, which emphasize self-esteem and feelings and teach youths to think of themselves in positive ways, share their experiences with abuse, and discuss coping strategies, are intended to be used by youth care practitioners, professional trainees, volunteers, peer counselors, and individuals in self-help programs. This guide outlines a six-week program of group meetings in a Participant's Guide, contains instructions for the group facilitator in a Leader's Guide, and provides background material on adolescent abuse and the group counseling process. Suggestions are also given for organizing a group and identifying participants. The activities of each group session are outlined according to objectives, skills, opening discussion notes, and learning steps along with films, discussion questions about problem situations, and additional reading resources. The sessions focus on getting acquainted, learning personal/interpersonal skills, understanding feelings, improving self-esteem, avoiding conflict, and building a support network. In addition, sample outlines describing each activity are included and may be photocopied for distribution to group participants. (JAC)

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Youth Helping Youth

A Directed Group Experience for Abused Adolescents

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Introduction

Helping Abused Adolescents

This program for conducting a Youth Helping Youth group is an outgrowth of a Boys Town Center project focusing on the problems and needs of abused adolescents. Because community services for these adolescents are so scarce, a goal of that project, directed by Dr. James Garbarino now of Pennsylvania State University, was to develop materials and resources that would help maltreated teenagers help themselves. One way to do that seemed to be to bring them together as a group to begin discussing, sharing, and dealing with their feelings of anger and hurt. Some of these adolescents believe abuse in families is "normal;" others think their experience is unique and feel isolated and alone. In a group, they could both meet other abused youth and learn that maltreatment is not common to all families.

The project created such a self-help group on a trial basis in 1978. Nancy Jacobson, a research and program associate at the Boys Town Center, and staff members from the Youth Assistance Center in Omaha led the first group. Information from that effort and other group meetings in Bellevue, Nebraska, and Sacramento, California, led to the writing in 1979 of "Creating a Youth Self-Help Group: A Guide for Practitioners Who Work with Abused Adolescents." The authors were Dr. Garbarino, Ms. Jacobson, and Shelley Leavitt, research and program consultant.

The guide used some strategies for teaching social skills currently in use in the Youth Care Department under the direction of Dr. Elery Phillips at Father Flanagan's Boys' Home. For information about the Youth Care program, write to: Program Dissemination Division, Youth Care Department, Boys' Town, NE 68010.

A major element in the revised Youth Helping Youth program is its focus on self-esteem and feelings. The youths are taught to think of themselves in positive ways. They are asked to share their experiences with abuse and to discuss with other members of the group how to cope with it.

The Program

Youth Helping Youth is a six-week program of group meetings. This publication has five sections that contain instructions on running the group and background material on adolescent abuse and group process.

The Adolescent Abuse section is an introduction for group leaders to the problem of maltreatment in families. It also has information about the film on abuse, "Don't Get Stuck There," which is suggested for viewing during the third session, and how to order it. Making Groups Work looks at the dynamics of groups and recommends ways to make Youth Helping Youth groups interesting and successful for leaders and adolescents.

The Leader's Guide and Weekly Sessions should be used simultaneously. Suggestions for organizing a group, finding participants, and getting parental permission are given in the Leader's Guide. The activities of the six group sessions are outlined and briefly discussed in the Weekly Sessions. However, detailed explanations of "ice breaker" exercises to help the young people meet each other, descriptions of personal and interpersonal skills, problem situations, and discussion questions can be found in the Leader's Guide. The Participant Notebook includes short descriptions of skills to be copied and given to the adolescents at the end of each session.

Adolescent Abuse

The Problem

Leon was beaten often at home. One morning, after an argument at breakfast, his father told Leon to get out. "He didn't want to see me around the house anymore."

Ann was imprisoned in her bedroom for months and had to ask permission even to eat.

Reports of defenseless infants and toddlers being beaten or neglected by parents stir public horror and sympathy. But both Ann and Leon are teenagers. In fact, one in three reports of child abuse involves victims between the ages of 10 and 18.

Yet, despite the increasing awareness of the tragedy of abuse of young children, the plight of abused adolescents largely goes unrecognized by the public and community agencies. Undiagnosed teenage victims of abuse come to their attention instead as runaways, truants, juvenile delinquents, or drug addicts.

Aretha, for example, ran away from home to escape a father who hit and sexually abused her. She told the police officer who found her sleeping in a motel hallway that she had been beaten at home.

"He didn't think that was anything too terrible," Aretha remembers. "He just said, 'Well, you shouldn't have run away.' The police officer sent her home with her father who 'drove the car with one hand and smacked me with the other.'"

Abuse takes a tremendous toll on the lives of adolescents. The cost to society is high as well. About three-quarters of those arrested for delinquency, up to one-half of the teenagers in runaway shelters, and large numbers of prostitutes, criminals, alcoholics, and drug addicts have family backgrounds of abuse.

Preliminary studies indicate that about half of the maltreatment of adolescents is simply a continuation of abuse that began when they were younger. Only now, they are bigger and better able to protect themselves or fight back.

As a result, says Dr. James Garbarino of Pennsylvania

State University, injuries that might come to the attention of medical professionals are much less common among adolescents than among young children, and the incidence of physical abuse declines as children get older. In those cases where it continues, however, the amount of force increases and weapons may be used.

That is what happened to Sandra. "I love my life, just like you do. When he tried to shoot up the stairs at me, I split," she says.

Causes of Abuse

Abuse of young children is often blamed on the parent being unable to cope with stresses such as poverty, unemployment, marital troubles, or single parenthood. Some adolescent abuse, however, may be generated by conflict between parent and child, with the teenager playing an active role in triggering the abuse.

"Kids can be provocative," says Dr. Garbarino. "The frustration of being responsible for, but not really being able to control or prevent, a teenager's behavior plagues almost every parent." In cases of adolescent abuse, these problems may push parents beyond their limits.

Dr. Garbarino explains, "Maybe the parents are facing some personal crisis, and on top of that their teenager stays out too late, runs off with the car, comes home drunk, or gets picked up by the police. They argue, yell, scream, and suddenly the parent loses control and clobbers the kid with something handy."

"I came home drunk," Maria admits. "My dad started screaming at me, I yelled back, my mom was in the middle of it, and then whammo — he slugged me with a wrench."

Emotional Abuse

For many adolescents, abuse is emotional rather than physical. For example, a parent may refuse to care for the teenager, turning the young person out of the family. A Washington runaway house discovered that one-third of the adolescents in its program were technically not runaways — they had been thrown out of the home.

Other teenagers are continually criticized, belittled, and humiliated by their parents.

"He turned on me and started yelling," says Ann. "I told him then, 'I love you and there's nothing you can do about it.' But he was drunk and he said, 'Well, I can't stand you. I can't stand your face and I can't stand seeing you or anything you do. If you love me, you wouldn't be the way you are.'"

Some parents resort to putting extreme restrictions on the movement and activity of their children — grounding them for weeks and even months at a time.

Ann was ordered to her room for six months by her father. "I had to ask him if I could eat, if I could go to the bathroom, everything. And he'd say 'Do you deserve it?' Of course, I deserve to eat!"

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse of teenagers by a relative — an older sibling, cousin, uncle, or father — is a critical problem. According to national statistics, 7 percent of those children between the ages of 12 and 17 are victims of some form of sexual abuse, ranging from exposure to intercourse. Adolescents make up 71 percent of all substantiated reports of sexual abuse.

Dr. David Finkelhor, a University of New Hampshire sociologist, surveyed students at six colleges and found that three of every 200 girls had been involved in father-daughter sexual activities. He says there are "all kinds" of sexually abusing fathers, "but often such a father is an unhappy, though not deranged, man with a normal sexual history. He's not doing well at work, his marriage has deteriorated emotionally and sexually, and he is not the type to seek comfort or sex outside the home. He needs a nonthreatening way to bolster his ego and confirm his masculinity, and there's his daughter."

The Consequences

When children are mistreated by the people they "belong" to, they mistakenly may come to accept the judgment that they are worthless and deserve the treatment they receive.

This is one boy's assessment: "My mom has hit me with furniture, and my dad has beaten me with beer bottles, his fist and everything else. But I don't blame them for doing it because I deserved every bit of it."

Eventually, in order to justify the abuse, adolescents may act to fulfill their parents' poor opinion of them. They behave destructively toward themselves and others by taking drugs, stealing, fighting, or becoming sexually promiscuous.

Suicide attempts by abused adolescents are common. "I've tried to kill myself three or four times," says one adolescent. "You don't want to exist anymore."

But many suffer silently — too ashamed to reveal the abuse by seeking help or frightened of hurting their parents whom they often still love.

"I couldn't tell anyone," says one victim of sexual abuse. "I was afraid it would break up the family — my mother wouldn't love me, and my father would kill himself."

Another asks, "Who could I talk to? If you can't trust your parents, who can you trust?"

Unfortunately, services for abused adolescents who do go looking for help are still in short supply. Perhaps it is assumed that older children are better able to fend for themselves.

A child protective services worker admits, "If we were to find two cases of equal abuse in two family situations, and one child was five years old and the other was 12 years old, we would take the five-year-old on our caseload."

What probably happens more frequently is that the abuser/teenager first comes in contact with the juvenile justice or social welfare systems as an "offender" rather than as a "victim." The youth's behavior, not the family abuse, is then seen and treated as the problem.

Help for Abused Adolescents

Communities such as New Haven, San Jose, New York, and Seattle have created services especially for older abuse victims. In many cases, the whole family enters the treatment program in an effort to keep the family together and find support for each member.

Dr. Robert Friedman of the Florida Mental Health Institute says there are several factors that can help abused adolescents become emotionally healthy adults. One is having a relationship with someone — a friend, teacher, counselor, coach, friend's parent — with whom the youth can "practice being likeable." Another is having a hobby, playing a sport, or holding a job where the teenager can succeed and win approval.

"It is the kids who fail at school, who don't have friends, who aren't really interested in anything that we worry about," says Dr. Friedman.

Also important is how adolescents cope with their feelings once they leave the family or the abuse has stopped, according to Dr. Friedman. "If a kid can realize that his family is screwed up, that this is not the way families should be and, despite how much it hurts, leave it behind, he'll be better off than if he keeps trying to make it work, coming back for more hurt and abuse."

Most young people, says Dr. Garbarino, do find some way of accommodating to the abusive situation and remain at home. "Some families, however, are so conflict-ridden that the child must live somewhere else, at least temporarily. Some may never be able to rejoin the family."

Jennifer, a victim of six years of relentless physical abuse by her parents before leaving home, offers this advice to other abused adolescents, "You can't walk around forever with these parents in your head beating you up all the time. You can grieve, but grieve and move on. Just don't get stuck there."

The Film

"Don't Get Stuck There," recommended for viewing in the third Youth Helping Youth session, is a film about a few of the tens of thousands of adolescents who are abused by their parents or other family members each year. These teenagers, from different parts of the country, talk about the problems they face, how they feel about themselves and others, and where they found help to cope with the abuse they suffered.

They agreed to tell their stories in front of cameras to help other victims recognize and come to terms with abuse and neglect in their homes. Viewing the film may make abused adolescents in a Youth Helping Youth group aware that they are not alone and can find help for their problem.

The 14-minute, color film was produced by the Boys Town Center in cooperation with Face-to-Face Health and Counseling Services of St. Paul, Minnesota. It is available for use on a one-week basis from the Communications Division, Boys Town Center, Boys Town, NE 68010, telephone (402) 498-1570.

Discussion Questions

After viewing the film, a discussion among abused adolescents might focus on the following questions. (The questions can be rephrased if the group is not made up of identified victims of abuse.)

Have your experiences been similar to those discussed in the film?

Do you, as a victim of abuse, find it difficult to reveal your situation to others? Have you found a friend or adult you can confide in?

Do you find it hard to trust adults when they express concern for you? Have you ever "tested" their concern by being rude, getting angry, or acting unkindly toward them?

Are you aware of any services in your community that might be of help to you or your family?

Additional Reading

The following books and articles contain further information about child and adolescent abuse.

Garbarino, James. Meeting the needs of mistreated youth. *Social Work*, 1980, Vol. 25, No. 2, 122-126.

Garbarino, James and Gwen Gilliam. *Understanding Abusive Families*. (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1980).

Garbarino, James, S. Holly Stocking, and Associates. *Protecting Children from Abuse and Neglect*. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1980).

Libbey, Patricia and Rodger Bybee. The physical abuse of adolescents. *The Journal of Social Issues*, 1979, Vol. 35, No. 2, 101-126.

Lourie, Ira S. The abuse of adolescents. In M. A. Thomas, *Children Alone*. (Reston, Va.: The Council for Exceptional Children, 1977).

Straus, Murray, Richard Gelles, and Suzanne Steinmetz. *Behind Closed Doors: Violence in the American Family*. (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1980).

Volpe, Richard, Margaret Breton, and Judith Mitton, eds. *The Maltreatment of School-Aged Children*. (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1980).

Making Groups Work

People in Groups

Despite how potentially relevant and useful the aims of a Youth Helping Youth group are to its members, the group will not be successful unless leaders conduct meetings that make the youths feel comfortable, committed, productive, and eager to return. This is true of all groups.

Too often, when people get together to work toward a common goal, they aren't satisfied with what happens: "Another meeting? We never get anything done!" "What a waste of time that session was." Poorly run groups generate frustration, impatience, and anger that block the potential creativity and usefulness of the group.

Yet small groups are among the most pervasive operating units in society. They are the primary means of accomplishing tasks (teams, departments, committees), teaching us how to get along in the world (families), and providing support and friendship (clubs, fraternal organizations).

How people function in groups has been studied by social scientists for more than 40 years. Unfortunately, little of this knowledge seems to be applied to the day-to-day functioning of most small groups judging by how people continue to complain of inefficiency and wasted time.

One reason for this may be that group leaders tend to concentrate their efforts on the **content** rather than the **process** of groups. Content is important — it is what motivates people to join groups. But leaders who give some thought to process — the organization and flow of meetings — can clarify content, get work completed on time, and keep participants interested.

Group Process

Every group meeting flows through a three-part process where, at each stage, members should feel their needs and expectations are being met.

How successfully a meeting opens depends on physical factors such as the location of the meeting, size of the room, and comfort of the seating arrangement. Psychological aspects of the opening include the number of group

members, their familiarity with each other, the expectations and level of commitment they bring to the group.

Probably the stage group leaders pay most attention to is the middle where content takes over. Here, group members focus on the task that brought them together — to discuss and solve a problem, to assign and complete work, to receive information, or to learn a new skill.

A group meeting may begin to close as soon as one member leaves the group setting, even if the task has not yet been completed. The activity of the group is likely to begin winding down from that moment.

Not attending to one of these stages does not move the group along more efficiently, rather the group experience will probably be less satisfying. For example, the opening must be long enough for the members to be introduced and feel at ease with each other. They need to adjust to the levels of commitment and disclosure required by the group. If the group tries to plunge into its activity too quickly, members may feel uncomfortable, be wary of joining in, or leave early.

In the middle stage, group participants must feel the work is being accomplished. If small talk and visiting run on too long, the group's time is wasted. Members may be reluctant to return to a group if they feel frustrated that the work will not be done.

The closing must bring the activity to a satisfying end. Reviewing the meeting's information and work, assigning further tasks, and setting time and date for the next meeting should be included in this stage. If members wander out at different times and the group session winds down to an inconclusive finish, earlier work and goodwill may be diminished.

The Youth Helping Youth Group

The leaders of a Youth Helping Youth group should give some thought to how these three stages in a group meeting can be conducted to increase the enjoyment of the teenagers and the effectiveness of the skill-learning sessions. Following are some suggestions.

For the opening stage:

- Do your homework, plan ahead, and be organized for each session.
- Make sure the room arrangement will be the most comfortable one for the youths and will encourage their participation.
- Start each session on time — participants will learn to be there and will be more likely to stay for the entire session. Nothing is more discouraging than meetings that regularly get off to a late start.
- Make sure all the teenagers know each other's names. Introduce new members to the group.
- Pay more attention to this stage during the early sessions. As the youths get to know one another better, the later sessions can move more quickly into discussion of family relationships and skills.

For the middle stage:

- Don't underestimate the value of preparation. Review the material to be presented at each session.
- Stick to the subject. Use the time to discuss the youths' experiences with abuse and to learn the personal and interpersonal skills. Limit "visiting time" to the period before and after the sessions.
- Make sure to ask each youth to contribute to the discussion.
- Think about assigning participants to small problem-solving groups to deal with tough issues or conflicts.
- Plan some fun for the group during each session.

For the closing stage:

- If the material you planned to cover doesn't fit into the allotted time, don't try to cram it into the last five minutes. Schedule another session or ask the youths to do some of the work between sessions. If this happens consistently, look at your style of presentation and ask yourself: "Can this material be handled differently?"
- Summarize what the group has done and mention what is coming up in the next session.
- Announce the time and date of the next session.
- At the fourth session, start to prepare the youths for the end of the group. Mention the date of the last session or talk about your plans for the closing activities.

- End on time. If the work isn't finished, negotiate a new ending time with the participants or set up another session.

Life Cycle of Groups

Groups usually go through a life cycle of their own: The opening sessions are the most difficult to get going; participants are hesitant to get involved. The middle sessions are most productive because group members are comfortable with each other and are at a high-energy level. At the final sessions, participants are aware the activity will end soon and they become less involved again.

The Youth Helping Youth program is designed to follow this cycle. The first and second sessions introduce only a few skills and concentrate on having the youths meet and get to know one another. These sessions are probably the most crucial for this type of group. The trust level of abused adolescents is already low, and the leader will have to be sensitive to this. It may be very difficult for them to talk about themselves in front of a group. The leader's goal is to make the first sessions comfortable and enjoyable so the youths feel safe in opening up to the group by the third or fourth session.

By the third and fourth meetings, the skills to be learned are more numerous and complex and the discussion will focus more directly on abuse and neglect. By the fifth meeting, the teenagers will be working hardest at integrating the skills into their lives outside the group. The sixth session offers some activities to provide a satisfying close to the group.

Additional Reading

More information on conducting successful groups can be found in these books:

- Bradford, Leland P. **Making Meetings Work.** (LaJolla, California: University Assoc., 1976).
- Doyle, Michael and David Straus. **How to Make Meetings Work.** (New York: Wyden Books, 1976).
- Gordon, Thomas. **Group-centered Leadership.** (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1955).
- Lippitt, Ronald and Eva Schindler-Rainman. **Taking Your Meetings Out of the Doldrums.** (LaJolla, California: University Assoc., 1977).
- Miles, Matthew B. **Learning to Work in Groups.** (New York: Teachers College Press, 1981).
- Zunin, Leonard. **Contact: The First Four Minutes.** (Los Angeles: Nash Publishing Corp., 1972).

Leader's Guide

Introduction

This section begins with suggestions on how to organize a Youth Helping Youth group. Experienced group leaders may have to refer to this material only briefly. The rest of the Leader's Guide provides information, including ice breaker exercises, to supplement the meeting activities outlined in the Weekly Sessions.

Twelve personal and interpersonal skills are given here for you to present at the sessions. They include: **introducing yourself and shaking hands, doing what you're told, apologizing, giving and accepting compliments, identifying your feelings, recognizing feelings in others, handling your feelings, improving how you feel about yourself, helping others feel better about themselves, responding to criticism, admitting mistakes, and standing up for yourself.** Abused adolescents often lack some of these abilities because of the poor handling of feelings and relationships they have experienced and learned from within their homes. Discussing and practicing some of these skills may help the youths change their part of interactions with parents, siblings, and peers.

Leaders may not be able to cover all 12 skills in the six program meetings. You will have to make some decisions about pacing the material presented here. Each session has a central theme such as understanding feelings, avoiding conflict, or improving self-esteem. All of these central topics should be discussed, but you can eliminate one or more of the individual skills suggested under each theme. You can do this to concentrate on skills that the youths need most to practice or that tap the deepest emotional response in discussion, or you can drop skills that don't seem appropriate to the group. For example, if you notice that group members are fairly assertive and tend to react belligerently to criticism, you could skip the skill of "standing up for yourself" and focus more time on "responding to criticism" in the fifth session. Another way to handle the material is to add extra sessions if the youths' and their parents' commitment to the group is no problem. The third session, for example, could be devoted entirely to viewing

and discussing the abuse film, with an extra meeting added to learn and practice the skills to understand feelings.

Finding Participants

Most communities do not have organized programs for adolescent victims of abuse and neglect. To identify these adolescents you will have to work with child protective services or the community mental health center. If one agency is willing to sponsor a group, other agencies and organizations can refer teenagers to it. Local Parents Anonymous chapters, groups of abusing parents working together to overcome their problem, also may be able to give you names of youths.

The sessions outlined for a Youth Helping Youth group are appropriate for any young person who wants to learn to interact with others more effectively. Churches, schools, YMCAs, or youth organizations may be willing to sponsor a group for teenagers who are having difficulty getting along with others at school or in the home. Such groups may include youngsters who are abused or neglected but who have not sought help from a social agency. A support group for teenagers may be a way for these abused adolescents to get help.

Referring a suspected victim of abuse to a youth group, however, does not release the group leader from the responsibility of reporting the case to authorities. You should tell the youths this, individually or as a group. Your group will probably be most successful if you work closely with the child protective services agency in your community. Perhaps you can arrange to have referral to the group take the place of formally reporting the family for abuse. Additionally, the group is not necessarily appropriate for sexually abused adolescents who may need intensive personal counseling or long-term therapy. This will require careful screening by you and the local service agency.

Finding Leaders

Group leaders must be able to make a six-week commitment to group meetings plus several additional weeks for preparation and wrap-up activities. You must be

willing also to participate in discussions and activities with the young people. Your goal should be to help create a friendly and supportive atmosphere where learning can happen.

The group, if it has ten or more participants, may need two leaders, preferably one male and one female. Leaders can be professionals from churches, schools, or human service agencies. One of the leaders could be a volunteer interested in helping young people. Many communities have Volunteer Bureaus that can assist in locating group leaders. Often, professional or service organizations are looking for worthwhile community projects and can provide experienced leaders.

Size of Group

The ideal group size is from eight to ten participants. This should provide enough variety of background and experience. If the group is too large, quiet teens may "disappear" among their more vocal peers. If the group is too small, discussion will be more difficult.

Age of Participants

A wide range of ages among participants may inhibit group discussions and hamper the effectiveness of the group. The life experiences and problems faced by a 17-year-old and a 13-year-old are quite different. If there are not enough participants for smaller age or school year groupings, you will have to revise the problem situations and discussion questions to meet the concerns of all group members.

Funding

One of the purposes of a Youth Helping Youth group is to provide maximum service at minimum cost. If possible, there should be no charge to attend the meetings. The primary costs are those of paying a handling charge for the film and copying the materials included in the Participant Notebook. There are 13 pages that may be reproduced for each participant; notebook binders are optional. If the youths want to plan an additional activity or party, they should take responsibility for earning money to meet costs.

Meeting Place

The usual meeting rooms for youth groups are church basements, school lunchrooms, or conference rooms in service agency offices. Sometimes these are the most centrally located and convenient, but there are other potential meeting places. Most businesses have conference or training rooms that may not be in use in the evening or on weekends. Libraries have meeting spaces. Banks often have courtesy rooms that can be used by service groups.

Using these facilities not only gives local business an opportunity to perform a community service, but it can

bolster the self-esteem of the participating youth who sees that others value the work of the group and the worth of its members. In small firms, you can approach the company president with your request. In larger corporations, you may want to see the training director, community or public relations officer. If a business provides a meeting room, it may also be willing to donate copying services or a small fund for expenses.

Transportation

Transportation may present a problem only if group members are geographically scattered and public transit is inadequate. Contact participants before the first session and solve any problems. One of the leaders may have to pick up youths who have no other way of getting to the sessions.

Number of Sessions

It is important that each member make a commitment to attend all of the sessions. Discuss attendance as one of the group rules at the first meeting.

Six sessions are outlined, but the adolescents may want to continue meeting beyond these planned activities. If so, you should help the group determine what responsibility each member will have and decide what your role will be. Are you willing to provide activities each week? Would monthly meetings be better? Are the youths ready to contribute to discussion topics and group activities?

Working with Parents

You should discuss the group with the parents of each participant before the weekly sessions begin. The group's major purpose is to provide a service to victims of abuse and neglect, but to confront parents over this issue (the responsibility of other social agencies) may only result in their refusal to let their child participate.

Instead, you can legitimately and truthfully describe the group as an opportunity for the adolescent to work on skills that should improve relationships with parents, teachers, and other young people. You can mention some of the topics the group will be discussing such as apologizing, handling feelings, and following instructions. If you can obtain not only permission but the support of parents, your group will probably be more successful.

Confidentiality

The youths must be aware that personal disclosures made in the group setting are not topics for general conversation outside the group, and this should be discussed at the opening session. You can never promise complete confidentiality. But, as the leader, you can and should promise trust and respect.

Talk to the child protective services agency in your area. It may agree not to initiate new abuse investigations for the duration of the group. However, you should tell the group

that you have the responsibility to report an incident of suspected abuse that occurs after the sessions begin.

Permission Slips

Permission slips indicating the dates, time, and location of the weekly meetings should be signed by the parents. If an outing is planned, a separate permission slip should be used. Both you and the parents should have copies.

A sample permission slip might look like the following:

My daughter/son _____ has permission to attend the Youth Helping Youth group at _____, on six consecutive _____ from _____ to _____. The dates are _____. The group leaders and their phone numbers are _____.
_____. Signature of Parent
_____. Home Phone Number of Participant
_____. Date

Discussion Techniques

Your task as a group leader is to encourage group discussion. However, young people in a new group may have difficulty talking about feelings. There are two techniques you can use that will help the young people join discussions:

1. Make sure that each person has an opportunity to say something. A participant's first response may be "I don't know." If this response is accepted with "OK, maybe you'll want to say something later," the youth won't be embarrassed and will slowly feel safe when he or she does have something to say. Explain at the first session that thoughts and opinions are not to be laughed at or ridiculed within the group.
2. Whenever possible, ask "what" or "how" questions that require more than one-word answers. "Why" questions ask for judgments and often invite defensive answers or no answers at all. For example: "Why did you say that to your parents?" asks for a justification. "How did you respond to your parents?" asks for the facts and invites discussion of alternatives.

Applying the Skills

After a personal or interpersonal skill has been presented to the group, the adolescents must consider how that skill could be applied in daily life. This can be accomplished in several ways.

Early in the program, if the young people feel reluctant to talk about personal experiences, you may use the problem

situations given in this guide to stimulate discussion.

Eventually, the group members should be able to contribute situations from their own lives that illustrate times when people could have used a particular skill (apologizing, admitting a mistake, or recognizing what someone else is feeling), but did not, and conflict resulted. It is important not only to talk about the arguments, abuse, and punishments the youths have experienced, but also to discuss how these bad situations might have been improved by using one or more of the skills under discussion.

At times, you may want to have several of the youths demonstrate a skill. Set up a problem, such as a parent criticizing a youth's clothes or length of hair. Then assign group members (sometimes including yourself) to the roles. Have them "act out" the problem situation, first as it might degenerate into an argument that could result in abuse and then as it might be resolved and conflict avoided. Your evaluation of these situations should always begin with praise or compliments of what the young people did well before turning to suggestions on how to improve.

Be realistic with the youths in discussing how effectively they can avoid abuse at home. Abuse will still occur in situations where no action taken by the adolescent could change the outcome. The group's aim is to help the youths avoid **some** confrontations, not to have them blame themselves when abuse does happen.

Many, but not all, of the situations given in this guide center on family life. But everyone needs to have some good relationships with people outside the home — with teachers, friends, or relatives. Problem situations not involving the family, therefore, show how the skills may contribute to friendships that are vital to the abused adolescent.

Finally, as group leader, you can reinforce the learning and practicing of skills by setting an example for the youths. Greet them at the door each week, give sincere compliments, listen attentively, and consider their suggestions seriously. You can show them how to use the skills they are talking about and give them an open, positive relationship with an adult.

The Partner System

Beginning with the third session, leaders are asked to pair each youth with a new partner each week. By suggesting that partners talk to each other or get together during the week, you are encouraging the adolescents to deepen friendships made in the group and to learn to trust and rely on others. These relationships can be the greatest benefit the young people derive from the Youth Helping Youth group.

You should watch the progress of the Partner System carefully. At the start, assign partners on the basis of where

they live, whether they are the same sex and age, or whether they share an interest. Make sure that partners know which one is going to initiate the phone call or that they both agree on a meeting place and time. Give them a good "excuse" for the contact — ask them to share their success in using the skills during the week, to help each other solve problems, or to talk about bringing difficult situations back to the group for discussion. But also let them know that it's okay to plan an activity or talk about topics irrelevant to the group. The youths may share problems more easily following an afternoon of rollerskating or a game of catch.

At group meetings, check informally to see if partner contacts are being made. If some of the youths find it difficult to make the first move with new acquaintances, try to pair them with the more outgoing members of the group. Changing partners weekly should widen each youth's circle of friends. Being assigned a new partner, of course, doesn't prevent former partners from continuing to talk or meet as friends.

ICE BREAKERS

The purpose of ice breakers is to allow members of a group first to meet and then to become more comfortable with one another. They can range from silly games to profound self-disclosure. Ice breaker exercises are suggested at the beginning of each weekly session, but they may not be necessary beyond the second week if the youths feel comfortable within the group.

The following exercises have been used successfully with groups of teenagers. One note of caution is necessary. If a game format is used, it is important for the leader to connect the lessons of the game to the focus of the session. The leader also should join with the youths in ice breaker activities. If you do not participate, then the young people may decide that they don't have to either.

The exercises are listed in the order they appear during the weekly sessions and roughly according to the level of disclosure they ask of the participants. They are only suggestions — you may substitute others if you feel they would be more appropriate for those in your group. Introducing an ice breaker may be awkward at first, but if you stick with the exercise, the adolescents should relax and begin to enjoy it.

For more exercises that can be used as ice breakers, see *The 1981 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators*, edited by John E. Jones and J. William Pfeiffer, San Diego: University Associates, Inc., 1981.

Pictures That Describe Me

This exercise requires a stack of old magazines. Participants should look for three or four pictures that best "describe" themselves. (A photo of a rocky seashore cliff might "describe" someone who feels lonely; a youth who

likes stylish clothes might select a picture of a sleek sports car, etc.) The group forms a circle. Each participant shows the pictures chosen and explains why they describe him or her.

Discoveries

Have the group sit in a circle. Designate one youth as the leader who assigns a different incomplete sentence to each person. Each participant then has to complete the sentence.

1. I felt surprised when....
2. I felt scared when....
3. I felt happy when....
4. I felt sad when....
5. I felt angry when....
6. I felt confused when....
7. I felt frustrated when....

The leader also completes a sentence. Have participants change sentences. After several rounds, lead a discussion about recognizing and labeling emotions.

"I'm Proud Because...."

Have the group sit in a circle. One person begins by completing the sentence "I'm proud because...." Everyone takes a turn. If time allows, each person can answer more than once. The youths may have trouble thinking of things that make them proud. If so, ask them if they remember times they did chores well, helped a friend who had a problem, lent clothes or money to a brother or sister, got a good grade on a class assignment, were friendly to a new neighbor or classmate, earned the money to buy a record album, or got their homework done on time. Point out that a wide variety of positive experiences can make us feel worthwhile. Then ask again if they can complete the sentence.

Millionaire

Divide the participants into groups of three. Each trio is given the following problem to resolve:

You and your friends are out hiking in the mountains and come upon a very old abandoned car. In the trunk is a leather case holding a million dollars in 20- and 50-dollar bills. Also in the case is a note: "If you find this, it means that I am dead. All my life I was selfish. I had no family. No one even knows I hoarded my money. I have never used my wealth for anything worthy. Now I want to help humanity — I want my money to help other people. But I'm stuck in a blizzard and I may die. If you find this note, take my money and put it to good use. Please do what I was never able to do." Signed, John Fitzpatrick, 1947.

What would you and your friends do with the money and why? Resolve any differences you have and come to a joint decision.

FIRST SESSION

Getting Acquainted

Objectives

- Set the stage for the following sessions
- Establish ground rules
- Have the youths meet and talk with one another

Skill

- Introducing yourself and shaking hands

Notes for Opening Discussion

First impressions can be very powerful and are sometimes the only information people have to make judgments about others. Appearance, attitude, facial expression, posture, and tone of voice are all factors in first impressions.

Many times, teenagers, especially victims of abuse and neglect, do not realize that their appearance and manner

influence how others, particularly adults, treat them. Some of the following questions might add to the discussion: Why does meeting new people sometimes feel awkward? Some people meet others with ease. What skills do they have? Do we introduce ourselves to adults differently than to other teenagers? Do we pay enough attention to the first impression we make when we are introduced to a new person or group?

Additional Reading

Zunin, Leonard. *Contact: The First Four Minutes*. (Los Angeles: Nash Publishing, 1972).

Introducing Yourself and Shaking Hands

Learning Steps

The Skill

What is to be learned?

How to introduce yourself. How and when to shake hands.

Why is it important to learn the skill?

Introductions are the first step to any relationship. This is an important skill in work situations. The impression you make in shaking hands and introducing yourself can be a lasting one.

What are the steps to using this skill?

1. Look at the person you want to introduce yourself to.
2. Extend your right hand and say "Hello, my name is _____."
3. Firmly grasp the other person's hand and give it a comfortable shake. Look at the other person while you are introducing yourself and shaking hands.
4. If you don't know the other person's name, ask for it. "And your name is?"

How can this skill be practiced?

Have the group form a circle and have everyone shake hands with everyone else. Ask the group to notice the feel of different handshakes. Then form pairs to practice firm handshakes.

Was the skill done correctly?

When two people practice watch for the following:

- eye contact
- clear speech
- firm handshake
- smile
- attentive look

Compliment them for the steps they do well. People are more willing to practice if they feel they are at least partially successful at what they try. It is easier to practice something they do well than something they do incorrectly.

Problem Situations

You can discuss these situations or assign participants to each part and have them demonstrate how the problems might get worse and then how using the skill of introducing yourself might lead to good outcomes.

1. As you open your front door, you remember that your parents have invited friends over. You cannot get to your room without walking through the living room and seeing the guests. What do you do and say when you get to the door of the living room?
2. It's your first day in a new school. At lunch, you overhear some students talking about a new record album that

none of them has. You recognize them from your English class. You have a copy of the album. What do you do and say?

3. Your church has greeters at the door before and after services. Your parents often criticize you for hurrying into and out of church and ignoring the greeters. What can you do and say when you go to church the next time?
4. You are in class, and the teacher hands you a note telling you to go immediately to the vice principal's office. The vice principal stands up when you walk in. What do you do and say?

SECOND SESSION

Learning Personal and Interpersonal Skills

Objectives

- Continue getting acquainted
- Introduce the concept of how people learn
- Present and explain learning steps
- Review and practice interaction skills

Skills

- Doing what you are told
- Apologizing
- Giving and receiving compliments

Notes for Opening Discussion

People acquire new skills in three basic ways. We watch how others behave and then do what we observe. We take some action ourselves and see what the consequences are — are others friendly, hostile, unhappy, or pleased with us? And, we learn by receiving direct instructions. (The books, *Social Development in Young Children* and *Skillstreaming the Adolescent*, discuss these methods of learning in more detail.)

We usually learn how to behave and handle our feelings in the first two ways. But if the people around us do these things poorly (often the case with abused adolescents), we don't have the best examples from which to learn. This group, then, is a way to learn interpersonal skills through instruction and practice.

Ask group members to list some skills they feel they have already learned and feel confident in using. In their book, *Where Do I Go From Here With My Life*, Richard Bolles and John Crystal say that the skills we are best at are the ones

we are most likely to forget we have — being polite, greeting friends, listening to others. Can the young people add other skills to the list of things they do well?

The authors also point out that we are often painfully aware of abilities we don't have. What are some skills the youths feel they lack and have trouble learning? They might include admitting mistakes, remembering to compliment others, or handling criticism. Make a list of these skills.

Focusing first on the strengths of the youths can give them confidence in their ability to learn new skills within the group.

Additional Reading

Bolles, Richard, and John Crystal. *Where Do I Go From Here With My Life*. (Berkeley: Ten Speed Press, 1978). The book is written for people analyzing their job skills, but the information can be applied to interpersonal skills.

Goldstein, Arnold P., et al. *Skillstreaming the Adolescent*. (Champaign, Illinois: Research Press Company, 1980).

Phillips, Elery L., Elaine A. Phillips, Dean L. Fixsen, and Montrose M. Wolf. *The Teaching-Family Handbook* (revised edition). (Lawrence, Kansas: Bureau of Child Research, 1974). This book outlines the program in use at Father Flanagan's Boys' Home and other residential treatment facilities.

Roedell, Wendy C., Ronald G. Slaby, and Halbert B. Robinson. *Social Development in Young Children*. (Monterey, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1977).

Stocking, S. Holly, Diana Arezzo, and Shelley Leavitt. *Helping Kids Make Friends*. (Allen, Texas: Argus Communications, 1980).

Doing What You Are Told

Learning Steps	The Skill
What is to be learned?	How to follow instructions. How to do what you're told without fighting or arguing.
Why is it important to learn this skill?	Using this skill demonstrates a willingness to listen and be helpful immediately. Doing what you are told quickly and correctly saves time and avoids arguments.
What are the steps to using this skill?	1. Look at the person who is telling you to do something and listen to what he or she says. 2. Think about what you are being told to do. Is it something you can or should do? 3. If what you are asked to do is something you can or should do, tell the person that you understand and then do the task immediately. If you are not sure you understand all the instructions, ask the person to explain the task again. 4. If what you are told to do is something you can't or shouldn't do, tell the person that you won't be able to follow the instructions. Give a simple reason why, ask for help doing the task, ask for different instructions, or suggest a compromise.
How can this skill be practiced?	Start with easy examples and then move to situations where the participants find it hard to do what they have been told. Use the situations listed for this skill.
Was the skill done correctly?	Watch facial expressions — the person receiving the instructions shouldn't pout or get angry. Make sure those receiving instructions give an indication that they understand what they are to do. Praise the steps the youths do well.

Problem Situations

Feel free to substitute discussion from the group for the problem situations that follow. These examples may be used to stimulate ideas from the young people.

1. You've had a rough day at school. Assignments were due, and you took a difficult test. When you get home all you want to do is rest, watch some TV, or listen to music. But as you walk in the door, your mother or father sees you and says, "Good, you're home early. I have a few chores you can do before supper." What do you do and say?
2. You and your best friend spend a lot of time on the telephone. Sometimes it is to discuss assignments and homework. One evening you are studying and your friend calls to go over a few math problems. Ten minutes into the conversation, your father comes to the phone and says, "Is this all you ever do? Get off the phone and do your homework!" What do you do and say?
3. You are late for class and are running down the hall. A

teacher walks out of a classroom, and you almost bump into him. He stops you and says, "Don't you know running in the halls is dangerous? Now go back to the end of the hall and walk to class." What do you do and say?

4. You and your friends are standing on the sidewalk in front of a drugstore. A policeman walks up and says, "Get moving." What do you do and say?

Discussion Questions

1. What happens when you do what you have been told promptly but with a resentful attitude or sarcastic comment?
2. Is there a difference between demands and requests? Do you respond differently to them?
3. How could using this skill improve your relationships with parents and teachers?
4. Can you think of situations where it would be improper or wrong for you to do what someone tells you? How could you handle these situations?

Apologizing

Learning Steps

The Skill

What is to be learned?

How to apologize in a way that fits the situation.

Why is it important to learn this skill?

When you apologize, you indicate that you are aware of other people's feelings and concerns. An apology demonstrates that you care about a relationship. When there is a misunderstanding between people, an apology clears the air so that a problem can be resolved.

What are the steps to using this skill?

1. Think about what you may have done or forgotten to do that might require an apology.
2. Decide what you want to say: "I'm sorry for forgetting your birthday," or "I'm sorry I didn't hear what you said, I'll try to listen more closely next time."
3. Figure out the best time to apologize. Usually that is as soon as you are aware that your actions have hurt another person. The longer the delay, the harder it is to apologize.
4. Find the other person and apologize. Look at the other person as you are speaking.

How can this skill be practiced?

Practice situations lack the emotion involved in really saying, "I'm sorry." But practicing an apology will help the youths find the right words later, when they are in the midst of an emotional situation. Use the situations listed for this skill or ask the youths to contribute their own experiences.

Was the skill done correctly?

An apology sometimes needs more than an "I'm sorry." It may be important to add an additional statement indicating that you are aware of your actions and will either correct the situation or will try not to have it happen again. Again, be sure to praise and encourage the youths and then point out ways they could improve.

Problem Situations

1. Your mother has asked you to start dinner when you get home from school. On your way to the kitchen you get a call from a friend and spend the next 45 minutes on the phone. When your mother gets home, you have not started the meal. What do you say?
2. You have had all semester to work on a social studies project. You keep putting it off and finally cram to finish the project in one weekend. It is not your best work, but at least it's done. When you get it back, the teacher writes a note asking you to come see her. What do you say to the teacher?
3. You have been asked to study at a friend's home. You agree to come, but on your way home you meet the person you've been wanting to date. He/she suggests that

you stop for a hamburger. You do and forget completely about studying with your friend. Later that evening, you remember. What do you say to your friend?

4. Your mother has grounded you for not cleaning up your room. You are still angry as you slowly pick up your dirty clothes. Your younger brother comes in and asks you to help him with his homework. You yell at him and tell him to get out of your room. He runs out, calling for your mother. What do you do and say?

Discussion Questions

1. Why is apologizing sometimes difficult to do?
2. What can be the benefits of a quick apology at home or at school?
3. How should you accept an apology from someone else?

Giving and Accepting Compliments

Learning Steps	The Skill
What is to be learned?	How to tell people when they have done something nice. How to react when someone says something nice about you.
Why is it important to learn this skill?	Compliments show that you care about others and they care about you. When people say they like you, you feel good about yourself.
What are the steps to using this skill?	1. Decide what you want to say: "I liked the way you spoke up in the group today" or "I like your new outfit" or "You sing like a real pro!" 2. Figure out the best time and place to give the compliment. 3. Look directly at the other person when you give the compliment. 4. If the person gives you a compliment, listen to and look at him/her. 5. Don't deny or minimize the compliment, but accept it with a smile and a "thank you."
How can this skill be practiced?	This should be easy to practice because group members can give real compliments to one another. The more they practice saying complimentary words the better able they will be to remember to try them out later. Use the situations listed for this skill or have youths talk about their experiences.
Was the skill done correctly?	Watch for the sincerity of the compliment. Encourage description of what it is the youths like. In addition to "I like your dress," try "Blue looks great with your eyes" or instead of "That was a good game," try "You made a great catch in the third inning."

Problem Situations

1. You have been making breakfast in the morning before leaving for school. One day your mother/father says to you, "It's been so much easier getting to work since you've been helping out." What do you say?
2. You've been in bed with the flu for three days. You find out your brother/sister has been covering your paper route. What do you say to him/her?
3. Your father is the high scorer one night at his bowling league. You congratulate him and he answers, "That was just luck — I've been lousy this year and you know it." How do you feel? What do you say?

Discussion Questions

1. Why do we sometimes reject compliments that others give us?
2. How do you feel when someone disagrees with a compliment you have given sincerely?
3. How do you react when a compliment is followed by a suggestion on how you could improve?

THIRD SESSION

Understanding Feelings

Objectives

- Discuss emotions and feelings
- View film and discuss adolescent abuse
- Discuss and practice skills
- Introduce the support network of Partners

Skills

- Identifying your feelings
- Recognizing feelings in others
- Handling your feelings

Notes for Opening Discussion

An event, person, or place may trigger an emotional response in us — a physical reaction takes place in our bodies. We may cry, get gooseflesh, start breathing faster, or feel the mouth go dry. But we also have an intellectual reaction — we label what we are experiencing as a feeling. We decide that we're angry, afraid, happy, nervous, etc. (For more explanation, see **The Affective Domain in Education**.)

Sometimes it is difficult to recognize what we or others are feeling, and anger is the label we mistakenly apply. Ask the youths whether they can remember expressing anger when perhaps what they were feeling was really loneliness, rejection, or hurt. Then ask them to consider whether their parents' anger might at times have been frustration, worry, or fatigue. We may feel too vulnerable to admit these other feelings. They often go unexpressed while the anger explodes. (See **Parent Effectiveness Training**.)

This process can be visualized by comparing it to a volcano. An illustration of the "volcano of feelings" follows. Show it to or draw it on the blackboard for the youths. Sometimes people suppress their feelings for a long time while the internal temperature builds up, and then an unrelated event or insignificant comment causes them to "blow up." Some people may have little control over their emotions, and they blow up quickly and often. Others may

be unpredictable — what caused them to blow up yesterday, they calmly shrug off today.

This discussion is particularly relevant for abused adolescents. Their parents or other adults may be improperly venting their frustration, hurt, or guilt by mistreating their children. The same process occurs when adolescents sometimes react to abuse by acting destructively toward others or themselves. The film, "Don't Get Stuck There," makes these points.

The skills to be learned in this session show how we can avoid exploding in anger ourselves or triggering the explosion in others. We must recognize and label our own feelings. Then we must learn to choose appropriate ways of handling our emotions. We can also learn how to recognize and respond to the deeper feelings that may underlie the anger of others.

Additional Reading

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Identifying Your Feelings

Learning Steps	The Skill
What is to be learned?	How to better understand your feelings. How to learn different ways to react to your feelings.
Why is it important to learn this skill?	Understanding feelings allows you to make choices in how you behave. When you don't identify negative emotions, they can build up and cause reactions you don't expect.
What are the steps to using this skill?	1. Notice what is happening inside your body: stomach tightening, sweaty hands, rapid breathing, light headedness, laughter, tears in eyes, lump in throat, face flushed, headache. 2. Think about what might have happened to you to bring about this reaction. 3. Try to label the body sensations with a feeling or emotion. For example, anger, joy, excitement, frustration, sadness, depression, curiosity, surprise, pride, hurt, happiness, delight. 4. Think how these feelings might be influencing your behavior.
How can this skill be practiced?	Practice for this skill involves describing feelings and understanding what causes them. Use situations listed for this skill or have youths talk about their own experiences.
Was the skill done correctly?	Encourage the youths to work to find the right emotional label. Praise their efforts to use words that are more descriptive than "happy" or "sad." Check to see that youths pay attention to body cues.

Problem Situations

1. You have been trying to help out at home more often, but no one seems to notice. Your parents keep nagging you. You are walking home thinking about this. How do you feel? (Help the youths see that they may feel hurt or neglected underneath the anger.)
2. You have been looking for a part-time job for weeks but have always been turned down. You start flopping down in front of the TV as soon as you get home from school each day. Your mother/father calls you "lazy." How do you feel? (Talk about feelings of frustration, rejection.)
3. A person you considered a friend has been telling people that you are a shoplifter — that he has even seen you steal records. What he says is not true; in fact he is the one who shoplifts. How do you feel? (Feelings of betrayal and hurt might be expressed as anger.)
4. As you are driving your friends home from a party, the car skids on a slippery street and hits a telephone pole. No one is hurt, but your parents' car is damaged. The police give you a ticket for careless driving and tell you to call your parents. How do you feel? (Discuss fear, relief, and sorrow.)

Discussion Questions

1. Are some emotions (anger) easier to talk about than others (hurt, fear)?
2. Are there some emotions men are not supposed to feel? Are there others women are not supposed to feel?
3. Do you try to hide some of your feelings from your parents, teachers, or friends?

Handling Your Feelings

Learning Steps	The Skill
What is to be learned?	How to handle the feelings you've identified in yourself.
Why is learning this skill important?	Learning how to handle your feelings helps you make better decisions on how to behave. You do not become trapped by emotional outbursts. If you learn to handle your emotions, you become less afraid of having feelings.
What are the steps to using this skill?	1. Think about what you are feeling and how it is affecting your body. Remember that feelings by themselves are neither good nor bad. What you do with your feelings can have good or bad consequences for you. 2. Figure out different ways to express your feelings. 3. Think about the consequences of these different behaviors. 4. Choose a behavior and consequence that seem to fit the situation.
How can this skill be practiced?	Practice in the group can be done by discussing past situations, remembering what we felt like, and how we reacted. Using past situations lets us think about possible alternatives. Use examples listed for this skill and ask the youths about their own experiences.
Was the skill done correctly?	Values should be attached to behaviors rather than feelings. For example, it's not wrong to feel angry. But to punch someone in the nose when we feel angry is wrong.

Problem Situations

1. You've been planning to meet friends on Saturday. Friday night your mother/father tells you that you'll have to watch your younger brother/sister instead. How do you feel? How should you behave?
2. You've had a fight with your best friend and you tell your parents about it. They say, "Well, I didn't like him/her anyway. Now maybe you'll be home more often." How do you feel? What can you say?
3. It's a damp, overcast day and you are home alone with nothing to do. You can't leave because you've been grounded for a week. How do you feel and what can you do to control or improve your feelings?

Discussion Questions

1. From whom do we learn how to handle our feelings?
2. Can you think of people who handle anger poorly (getting into fights, lashing out verbally) and others who handle it well? What are some constructive ways of dealing with anger?

Recognizing Feelings in Others

Learning Steps	The Skill
What is to be learned?	How to be aware of the feelings of other people.
Why is it important to learn this skill?	If you learn to be aware of how other people feel you can begin to understand what makes them act the way they do.
What are the steps to using this skill?	1. Observe other people and notice their facial expressions or body movements — red face, sweaty hands, sad eyes, slow movements, slumped shoulders. 2. Listen to what they are saying, pay attention to the tone of their voice. 3. Try to label what they are feeling. 4. Consider what is happening to them to make them feel this way. 5. Think about how emotions might influence their behavior.
How can this skill be practiced?	Practice for this skill can come from watching other people or from remembering how people looked and acted during past experiences. Ask the youths about their own experiences or use situations listed for this skill.
Was the skill done correctly?	Encourage use of a variety of words to express feelings. Ask them whether their first impressions of others' feelings are always accurate.

Problem Situations

1. Your mother/father comes home from work, opens the mail and drops it on a table. Then he/she turns to you and yells, "How many lights do you need on at once? I don't own the electric company!" What might your parent be feeling? (Worry might be the cause of anger.)
2. While you are waiting to see the assistant principal you are able to watch him talk to another student. His face is a little bit flushed, and he pounds his fist on the desk several times. What might the assistant principal be feeling? How might he feel when he talks to you?
3. It is Saturday morning and you are still in bed. You hear the water running in the kitchen, your younger brother and sister arguing about which television program to watch, and then you hear your mother asking where you are. What emotions might your mother be feeling? How might she behave when she finds you?

Discussion Questions

1. How do characters on television shows like "Happy Days," "The Incredible Hulk," or "The Jeffersons" show their feelings? Are the emotions of your parents, teachers, and friends easier or more difficult to figure out?
2. Can you think of people you know who express the same feelings (anger, happiness, worry) in very different ways?
3. Do others often misunderstand your feelings? Why do you think that happens?
4. What might happen if your parents are actually worried about money problems or their jobs, but you think they are angry with you? How can you be sure you are correctly interpreting their emotions?

FOURTH SESSION

Improving Self-Esteem

Objectives

- Define self-esteem
- Discuss and practice self-esteem skills
- Reinforce the Partner System

Skills

- Improving how you feel about yourself
- Helping others feel better about themselves

Notes for Opening Discussion

Abused adolescents may not feel very good about themselves. One of the ways we measure our worth is by judging whether we are accepted and approved by others. These youths have suffered rejection from the most important people in their lives — their parents. Often, they conclude it is their fault; they decide they are unlovable, not only by their parents but also by other adults and peers.

This poor self-esteem in the family setting may color all of the adolescents' beliefs about their values as human beings. They may be competent in other areas of life — as students, athletes, workers, or friends. But they either fail to see these assets as valuable or deny they have any good points at all.

Point out to the group that each individual decides what's important in judging self-worth. But it is not realistic or fair to themselves to allow poor family relationships to deny them success, competence, or satisfaction in all other areas of life. They can still feel good about playing the guitar well, being a good car mechanic, having a close friend, helping a teacher with a task, contributing to a team project or sport, or holding a job.

For a start, help the adolescents find the things, however small, they believe they do well. One accomplishment can give them confidence that they are capable of others.

Then explain that they can build defenses to protect their self-esteem. How they feel about themselves may often be affected by their interpretation of events. For example, criticism can be seen as a personal attack or as an effort to be helpful. A mistake can be taken as evidence of stupidity or can simply be admitted and corrected. Abuse may be viewed as punishment for being a bad person or understood as a parent's inappropriate reaction to stress. Discuss how recognizing their good qualities and learning to be fair to themselves when things go wrong can improve their self-esteem.

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- Harris, Thomas A. *I'm OK, You're OK*. (New York: Harper and Row, 1967).
- Simon, Sidney B. *I Am Lovable and Capable*. (Niles, Illinois: Argus Communications, 1973).
- Simon, Sidney B. *Vulture*. (Niles, Illinois: Argus Communications, 1977).

Improving How You Feel About Yourself

Learning Steps	The Skill
What is to be learned?	How to feel better about yourself.
Why is it important to learn this skill?	How you feel about yourself influences how you behave toward others and treat yourself.
What are the steps to using this skill?	1. Take a few minutes to think about the good things you've done in the past day. These can be as simple as reading a bedtime story to a younger brother or sister, studying for a test, being friendly to someone, or doing a chore at home. 2. Mentally congratulate yourself for each one. 3. Erase negative statements: "I'll probably flunk the test." "Nobody likes me." "I look awful." 4. Decide what you can do tomorrow that will make you feel even better about yourself.
How can this skill be practiced?	This works best as a paper and pencil skill. Have everyone follow the steps by writing positive statements about themselves. This will be more comfortable than talking aloud about their good qualities.
Was the skill done correctly?	Everyone should have a list — don't let anyone say they have no good points. They don't have to be star athletes or "A" students to feel good about themselves in some way.

Problem Situations

1. At the top of your history test is a big red "D." There is another test scheduled for next week. What do you say to yourself?
2. You have finished sewing a jacket. It fits pretty well, but one seam is slightly crooked. As you look at yourself in the mirror, what are you thinking?
3. You have done odd jobs for neighbors and saved enough money to buy tickets to a rock concert you really want to attend. You show the tickets to your parents, telling them how you earned the money. They say, "You paid \$30 to listen to that junk?" What do you say to yourself?
4. You've just had another argument with your father about your grades. In his anger, he shouts at you, "You're a disgrace to the family!" How do you feel and what do you say to yourself?

Discussion Questions

1. At what times do you feel most positive about yourself? What could you do to make those times come more often?
2. Why do we sometimes let criticism from others damage our self-esteem? How can we use criticism constructively?
3. Why do we tend to accept others' negative evaluations of us? What can we do to bolster our self-esteem?

Helping Others Improve Self-Esteem

Learning Steps	The Skill
What is to be learned?	How to help other people see their positive qualities.
Why is it important to learn this skill?	When you encourage others to feel good about themselves, they are in better spirits and nicer to be with. You can build trust and mutual respect in relationships when you see the best in others.
What are the steps to using this skill?	1. Listen to what people say about themselves. 2. Watch for negative statements made about themselves or their abilities. 3. Look for opportunities to point out their good qualities or things they do well. 4. Tell them!
How can this skill be practiced?	Use the practice situations and discussion questions. The youths may know people who exhibit high or low self-esteem.
Was the skill done correctly?	Make sure sincerity and real regard for others prompt positive statements. Statements to others should be realistic and believable. As group leader, you should be demonstrating this skill often in working with the youths.

Problem Situations

The adolescents should talk about how they could not only be empathetic but help restore the self-confidence of the people in these situations.

1. A good friend studied hard for an algebra test but only managed to get a "C" from the teacher. The friend says, "I'm so stupid. I'll never understand math." What can you say to your friend?
2. Dinner is late, the meat is overcooked, and your mother looks upset. If you criticize the meal, what would your mother's reaction be? What might you say to her instead?
3. Your sister was counting on going to a high school dance, but no one has invited her. As the date for the dance approaches, you notice that she is short-tempered and edgy. What can you say to her?

Discussion Questions

1. How could working on this skill improve relationships between you and your parents?
2. Do you know someone who is usually cheerful and encouraging with you? How do you feel about him or her?

FIFTH SESSION

Avoiding Conflict

Objectives

- Discuss causes of conflict
- Discuss ways of avoiding conflict
- Practice conflict avoidance skills

Skills

- Responding to criticism
- Admitting mistakes
- Standing up for yourself

Notes for Opening Discussion

The skills discussed and practiced in this session are crucial for abused adolescents. **Sometimes** their behavior at home provokes conflict and triggers incidents of abuse. Learning ways to avoid conflict can reduce the amount of maltreatment teenagers suffer.

The discussion should focus on everyday events that might produce conflict between adolescents and parents — doing chores and homework, staying out late, using the car without permission, arguing with brothers and sisters. The youths can suggest other situations.

Give examples of how such events can be mishandled and what the consequences may be — hurt feelings, arguments, fist fights, being grounded. Conflict is not inevitable. Adolescents can manage to get control of **some** situations that may lead to angry confrontations. Their behavior can influence the outcome.

Two ways of reducing the possibility of conflict are responding to criticism and admitting and correcting mistakes. Both are skills to be practiced during this session.

In another kind of situation, parents and friends may take advantage of an abused teenager's lack of assertiveness. Parents may have the youth take over most of the household tasks or care of younger siblings. Friends may make inappropriate demands. Ask group members if they know of such instances.

The third skill, standing up for yourself, may help the youths see they have some options in these situations. Have them discuss how to decide when they should negotiate and work out compromises, when to refuse, and when it's best simply to agree to a demand.

Additional Reading

- Baron, Robert A. *Human Aggression*. (New York: Plenum Press, 1977).
- Dreikurs, Rudolf, et al. *Family Council: The Dreikurs Technique for Putting an End to War Between Parents and Children (and Between Children and Children)*. (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1974).
- Gordon, Thomas. *Parent Effectiveness Training*. (New York: Peter H. Wyden, Inc., 1970).
- Harris, Thomas A. *I'm OK, You're OK*. (New York: Harper and Row, 1967).
- Simon, Sidney B. *Negative Criticism and What You Can Do About It*. (Niles, Illinois: Argus Communications, 1978).
- Smith, Manuel J. *When I Say No, I Feel Guilty*. (New York: Bantam, 1975).

Responding to Criticism

Learning Steps	The Skill
What is to be learned?	How to respond to fair criticism without being defensive. How to handle criticism that is unfair.
Why is learning this skill important?	If you know the difference between criticism that is well-meant and helpful and personal attacks, you can avoid bad feelings and arguments. You can learn from criticism.
What are the steps to using this skill?	1. Look at the person giving the criticism and listen to what he or she is saying. 2. Think about the criticism: Is it justified? Why was it made? If you don't understand it, ask for an explanation. 3. Don't get angry, pout, swear, or criticize in return. 4. If the criticism is justified, accept it with a simple "I see what you mean. I'll try to do better next time." 5. If the criticism is not justified, ignore it or calmly say that you don't agree and explain why.
How can this skill be practiced?	Practice should focus on finding alternative responses to criticism. Use the situations listed for this skill. Ask the youths for examples.
Was the skill done correctly?	Tone of voice and body position can convey meanings they don't intend. Reinforce with praise the steps the youths do well.

Problem Situations

1. For the past few months, you have been having trouble with acne and are very self-conscious about how you look. One morning your mother says, "You know I don't want you wearing that T-shirt to school. Did you remember to wash your face this morning?" How do you respond?
2. As you finish a phone call from a friend, your mother/father says, "That gang you run around with is nothing but a bunch of punks. I catch you going out with them again and you're grounded." How do you respond?
3. You had a fight with your parents this morning, and you haven't been paying attention in shop class. Later, you walk over to a drill and turn it on. The teacher shouts at you from across the room, "Turn that off! Do you want to lose a finger? If you can't follow directions, you don't belong in here." How do you respond?

Discussion Questions

1. How often are you more willing to criticize than compliment others?
2. If someone has made a mistake, are there ways to make criticism helpful rather than hurtful?
3. How do you prefer to be told when you've done something wrong?
4. How do you respond to criticism from your parents? Do your attitude, posture, and words make the situation better or worse?

Admitting Mistakes

Learning Steps	The Skill
What is to be learned?	How to admit that you did something wrong.
Why is learning this skill important?	Admitting mistakes first prevents others from criticizing you. It shows people you care about learning how to do things correctly.
What are the steps to using this skill?	1. Figure out what went wrong. Don't make up excuses or try to blame someone else. 2. Remember that everyone makes mistakes. 3. Decide how the mistake can be corrected or prevented from happening again. 4. Consider who must be told about the mistake and then tell them. If appropriate, ask them for help in correcting it.
How can this skill be practiced?	Use the situations listed for this skill and examples contributed by the group for discussion and demonstration.
Was the skill done correctly?	Eye contact is important while explaining the mistake. Remind the youths that admitting a small mistake and asking for help is how to avoid making bigger mistakes later.

Problem Situations

1. Your family has a rule that if you are going to be late you are supposed to call them to let them know. After school, you meet friends who invite you over to listen to records. When you get home, you suddenly remember that you never called. You know your parents will be waiting for you. What do you say and do?
2. A friend has told you something and asked you not to tell anyone else. But at a party, you forget and let the secret slip. What do you tell your friend?
3. You use the car without telling your parents. You scrape against a light post in a parking lot, putting a long scratch on the passenger door. You know your father won't see it until after he's driven the car to work. What do you do and say?

Discussion Questions

1. Do you often find it difficult to admit mistakes?
2. What can happen if you first deny and then must admit making a mistake?
3. Are people more willing to forgive and forget your mistakes if you offer to correct them?

Standing Up For Yourself

<u>Learning Steps</u>	<u>The Skill</u>
What is to be learned?	How to stand up for yourself when you feel you have been treated unfairly.
Why is it important to learn this skill?	Sometimes people have unreasonable expectations of you, take you for granted, or ask you to do things that are wrong or illegal. You can avoid or improve these situations if you know how to stand up for yourself.
What are the steps to using this skill?	1. Think about what others are expecting, asking, or saying of you. 2. Consider whether their opinions or requests are valid, moral, and beneficial to you. 3. If they are not, decide how you should respond — ignore, refuse, compromise, offer an alternative. 4. Make your response calmly.
How can this skill be practiced?	The young people can probably come up with situations from their own lives when using this skill would have been useful. Use the situations listed for this skill.
Was the skill done correctly?	Help participants think of different ways of responding.

Problem Situations

1. You have been sent to the vice principal's office. He says to you, "I'm going to have to suspend you for three days. Mr. Hunter says you and three other students were smoking pot in the parking lot. I don't understand how you can use such poor judgment by running around with that gang." You weren't in the parking lot. What do you say and do?
2. You are with some friends in a department store. They decide to take some small items without paying for them. They call you a sissy and say you don't have the guts to shoplift. What do you say and do?
3. You are an hour late coming home from a date. When you walk in the door, your parents say you are irresponsible and can't be trusted. They ground you for a month. You have already bought tickets to a rock concert two weeks away. What do you say and do?
4. You signed up weeks ago to work on the stage crew for the school play. Now, two days before the Saturday night performance, your parents say they'll be gone all that day and you will have to watch your younger brother/sister. Are there any compromises that would satisfy you and your parents?

Discussion Questions

1. How can you stand up for yourself without looking like a smart aleck?
2. Have you ever been in situations where you later wished you had spoken up for yourself?
3. Are there ways to stand up for yourself in abusive situations without striking back?
4. What happens to our self-esteem if we never stand up for our rights?
5. Are there times when it is better to say and do nothing rather than risk provoking an argument?

SIXTH SESSION

Putting It All Together

Objectives

- Provide overview of the skills
- Discuss use of skills in everyday situations
- Present closing activities

Notes for Opening Discussion

The final session should be spent reviewing the skills learned and talking about how their use in daily life can improve relationships for the adolescents at home, in school, and with friends. Make a list of all the personal and

interpersonal skills presented to the group. Ask the youths how and when they think they can use them. Point out that many situations require using a combination of skills. Have the youths talk about what limits there are — what they should do when situations get out of control and abuse occurs.

One of the purposes of the Youth Helping Youth group was to build a support network among the participants. Take some time to discuss how group members can maintain friendships made in the past six weeks.

Weekly Sessions

Introduction

The Youth Helping Youth program has six group sessions, each about 90 minutes long. Each session consists of an introductory activity of either an opening discussion or an ice breaker exercise, a discussion of the skills to be learned, presentation of the learning steps for each skill, time for practice, and a wrap-up to the meeting. Descriptions of the activities are short so leaders can see the organization and flow of the sessions. Detailed notes and examples can be found in the Leader's Guide.

Because the sessions are each only 90 minutes long, no breaks are suggested. However, if funds allow and the youths have parental permission to spend the extra time, serving refreshments and allowing time for socializing after each meeting may benefit the group. If participants know they will have time to visit and talk later, it may be easier for you to keep discussion during the sessions focused on relevant topics. This will also be another opportunity for the

youths to begin building friendships by sharing small talk and discovering common interests.

It is important to read this entire section before the group sessions begin. Some of them call for advance thought and preparation — for example, ordering and previewing the film on adolescent abuse to be shown at the third meeting.

Leaders are also urged to use their own skills and enthusiasm to conduct sessions and add activities that will make the learning enjoyable for the young participants. Of course, any way the leader can tailor the program to fit the age and experiences of group members will make it more valuable for them. Concentrate on the personal or interpersonal skills that most interest the youths or are the ones they need most to improve. Skip those that you don't have time for or that don't seem appropriate for the group, or schedule additional sessions, as discussed in the Leader's Guide.

FIRST SESSION

Getting Acquainted

Time	Activity	Notes
SETTING THE STAGE		
	Arrive 15-20 minutes prior to the start of the group session.	Make sure you have flip chart, marking pens, and masking tape, or access to a blackboard.
	Check all materials to be used.	
	Arrange chairs in a circle so everyone can see one another.	
	Greet participants as they arrive. Shake each person's hand, and call him or her by name.	This will demonstrate the first skill of introducing yourself and shaking hands.
30 min.	GETTING STARTED	
Introduction and Ice Breaker	Introduce yourself. Explain what interested you in working with a Youth Helping Youth group.	This session will not follow the same format as the other sessions. There are housekeeping chores that have to be taken care of so the group can work effectively.
	Explain the purposes of the group:	
	1. To meet other teenagers and form some new friendships.	Have these written on flip chart or blackboard.
	2. To learn new and practice old personal and interpersonal skills.	
	3. To improve relationships at home, at school, or with friends.	
	Briefly review the topics that are going to be covered during the next weeks:	
	Understanding Feelings Improving Self-Esteem Avoiding Conflict	
	At each session, the importance of using these skills in life situations will be discussed.	
	Ask for any questions about yourself, the group, its purpose, etc.	
	To help everyone get acquainted, run an ice breaker exercise. The one titled "Pictures That Describe Me" is a good exercise for new groups. The pictures help people talk about themselves without feeling threatened.	See Leader's Guide.

50 min.

MAIN ACTIVITY

Ground Rules

After the ice breaker explain that the group needs to establish some ground rules for how the group will operate. List one or two rules you consider vital such as:

1. No one makes fun of another person.
2. Discussions in the group are not appropriate topics for conversation outside the group.

Ask the youths to list other rules that might be important for the group. You may not get immediate responses so you might want to suggest categories of rules such as attendance, arriving on time, or smoking.

When all the suggestions are listed, discuss the importance of each rule and reach a general agreement. Mention that it is each person's responsibility to abide by the rules.

Use flip chart to list ground rule suggestions.

Rather than trying to come up with a lot of rules, leave the option of adding rules later if they are needed.

Opening Discussion

Begin a discussion on meeting new people.

Ask the youths what they notice about people the first time they meet. What factors contribute to their first good impression of others? How can they leave the same good impressions on people they meet?

Point out that the group has already used the skill of getting acquainted. What were their first impressions 40 minutes ago?

See Leader's Guide for additional notes.

This opening discussion should be short, no more than 10 minutes, and should set the stage for the skills to be presented. Encouraging the youths to add to the discussion will help them see the usefulness of the skills in their own lives.

Skill Presentation

Present the skill of Introducing Yourself and Shaking Hands.

1. Look at the person you want to introduce yourself to.
2. Extend your right hand and say, "Hello, my name is _____."
3. Firmly grasp the other person's hand and give it a comfortable shake.
4. If you don't know the other person's name, ask for it. "And your name is?"

See Leader's Guide for presentation hints. The group will learn and practice this skill without using the formal "Learning Steps" to be presented at the second session. All that is needed here is a brief description of the skill.

Applying the Skill

Demonstrate the skill with someone from the group. Have the youths form a circle and introduce and shake hands with everyone else.

Discuss when handshaking is important and useful. Discuss when it might be better to use another type of greeting. Have volunteers demonstrate other greetings.

The group can have some fun discussing and demonstrating handshakes that are limp, cold, damp, etc.

If time permits, discuss the practice situations in the Leader's Guide.

10 min.

WRAPPING UP

To conclude the session, have everyone think of situations in the coming week when they can practice introducing themselves and shaking hands. Make sure that each person has at least one **real life** situation in mind.

Review the date, time, and location of the next session. Talk briefly about the topics to be covered then.

It might be a good idea for them to write down where they are going to practice.

Try not to rush the wrap-up. Make sure everyone understands what is to happen next week.

SECOND SESSION

Learning Personal and Interpersonal Skills

Time	Activity	Notes
SETTING THE STAGE		
	Arrive a few minutes before the session starts.	
	Review the skills to be presented.	
	Have participants who arrive early help set up the room.	
20 min.	GETTING STARTED	
Ice Breaker	You may begin with an ice breaker.	See Leader's Guide.
60 min.	MAIN ACTIVITY	
Opening Discussion	Briefly review the skill discussed at the last session. List on the flip chart the three ways people learn skills. Ask the youths how they learned to: add or subtract, make a sandwich, play baseball or ride a bicycle. Then ask how they learned to follow instructions, apologize, or give compliments. Point out that often they learn skills simply by watching others. In this group, they are going to discuss and practice some skills.	See Leader's Guide.
Skill Presentation	Present the five steps to learning and relate them to some skill the young people are familiar with — riding a bike, changing a tire, playing baseball. Step 1 - What skill is to be learned? "I want to know how to change a flat tire." Step 2 - Why is it important to learn this skill? "I need to know because I might get a flat tire when no one else is around to help." Step 3 - What are the steps to using the skills? "My brother taught me to change a tire. First, he showed me where the equipment was and how to use it. He changed a tire while I watched and then I did it while he watched and told me what to do next." Step 4 - How can the skill be practiced? "I changed three tires." Step 5 - Was the skill done correctly? "My brother watched and checked my work after each step and complimented me when I did it right. I practiced until I could change a tire without any help from my brother."	

These same steps can be used to learn personal and interpersonal skills. Some skills that are helpful in getting along with people are:

- Doing what you are told
- Apologizing
- Giving or accepting compliments

Ask the participants to explain one of the skills using the learning steps.

Step 1 - What skill is to be learned?

How to do what you're told to do without getting mad or having someone get mad at you.

Step 2 - Why is it important to learn this skill?

If you can figure out how to do what people ask, they won't yell at you. You won't have to stay after school so often. At home, you will argue less with your parents.

Step 3 - What are the steps to successfully doing what I am told?

Ask a youth to get something in the room and bring it to you. Discuss what steps they took to follow that instruction:

1. You looked at me and listened to what I said.
2. You probably thought about what I asked you to do before you did it. Notice that you didn't pout or say something like, "Why me?" or "Do it yourself!"
3. You said OK.
4. You did what I asked.

Step 4 - How can the skill be practiced?

Ask the youths to suggest situations where this skill would be useful:

- Parents telling you to do homework.
- Coaches running a practice.
- Employers giving directions at work.

Step 5 - Was the skill done correctly?

Always go over the positive points first. It's easier to continue practicing if the youths know they've done some of the steps correctly.

At this point, stop and discuss the skill. Some possible topics:

- When not to follow instructions
- What to do if you don't understand
- What stops us from practicing this skill
- Why it is sometimes difficult to do what we are told and sometimes easy.

List skills on flip chart.

One skill is outlined in detail. For examples of other skills see the Leader's Guide.

The participants should make similar responses.

The Leader's Guide and Participant Notebook have each skill broken down into steps. With your help, the youths should be able to come up with most of the steps. Save the Notebook pages until the end of each session so the youths can use them as reminders during the week.

Don't spend too much time on this now. You can go back and talk about applying the skill later in more detail.

The Leader's Guide has additional discussion questions.

Applying the Skill

10 min.

Give the group members a chance to understand the skill from their own point of view. If they figure out reasons why the skill is important, they are more likely to use it.

Have the youths spend a few minutes demonstrating or talking about how they could use the skill.

Present the other skills if time allows. You will have to adjust material to the needs and interests of your group.

Use the situations provided in the Leader's Guide.

The Leader's Guide discusses how to pace the group sessions if there is too much material to handle.

WRAPPING UP

Ask the youths to think of situations when they will use these skills during the coming week. Make sure each person has a real life situation in mind.

Before everyone leaves remind them of the next session, time, and location.

If time permits, talk about the possibility of the group doing something together — a picnic, hike, or roller skating party. Let the group be responsible for the planning.

THIRD SESSION

Understanding Feelings

Time	Activity	Notes
	SETTING THE STAGE	
	Arrive a few minutes before the session starts. Review the skills to be presented and discussion questions. Test the audiovisual equipment and make sure the film, "Don't Get Stuck There," is ready for viewing. Prepare the Partner List. Have participants who arrive early help set up the room.	Before each of the next sessions, pair each adolescent with a new partner. They will be asked to call or meet each other during the week to talk about their practice of skills.
10 min.	GETTING STARTED	
	As everyone is getting settled, ask how practice from the previous week went. Briefly review the skills that were discussed. If it looks like an interesting discussion is starting, skip the ice breaker. If you use an ice breaker, use one that will help identify and label feelings, such as "Discoveries."	
70 min.	MAIN ACTIVITY	
Opening Discussion and Film	Ask youths to list on the flip chart words that describe emotions. Try to get a wide variety of words. Point out that we are capable of all these emotions, but often put the wrong labels on what we are feeling. This is what happens when we or others get angry. Draw a volcano on the flip chart. Explain that feelings like hurt, worry, or fear are often buried inside us. The pressure of these feelings builds up until we explode, usually in anger — like a volcano. Ask the youths if they can think of situations where this happened to themselves or others. What were the results? Explain that emotions aren't "good" or "bad." What is important is how we respond to them. To feel sad, hurt, or ashamed is not wrong. But it is wrong to hit someone because we feel sad or angry. We need to learn better ways of responding to our feelings. Lead into the movie "Don't Get Stuck There." After viewing, have the adolescents discuss the film. Does the volcano help explain what happens in abusive families?	See Leader's Guide for additional notes. Prepare a list of words that you can add: ashamed, curious, elated, greedy, nervous, bothered, content, triumphant, cheerful, somber, wistful, etc. See Adolescent Abuse section for more discussion questions. This film may be just the tool to break open a discussion about the youths' problems with abuse.

**Skill Pre-
sentation**

List on the flip chart the skills related to understanding feelings:

- Identifying your feelings
- Recognizing feelings in others
- Handling your feelings

Ask one or more of the participants to explain one of the skills using the learning steps outlined the previous week.

1. What skill do you want to learn?
2. Why is it important to learn this skill?
3. What are the steps to using the skill?
4. What are some good practice situations?
5. Was the skill done correctly?

If time permits, go through all the skills.
In life they go hand in hand and it may be logical and easy to practice them together.

Allow time for discussion. Use questions such as:

- What happens when we don't use these skills?
- What makes it difficult to practice these skills?

It is important to point out that actions have consequences. The more aware we are of consequences, the better able we are to make decisions and be responsible for our own behavior.

**Applying the
Skill**

You can use the problem situations in the Leader's Guide and discuss them as a group, assign people to parts and demonstrate the skills, or have small groups discuss and then present solutions to the problems to the whole group.

10 min.

WRAPPING UP

Have the participants think of real life situations during the week where they can practice the skills they have learned thus far.

Assign everyone in the group a Partner. The Partner is to call or see them sometime during the week to talk about how practice is going, to be a friend, and to help each other work out problems.

The Leader's Guide has discussion questions for each skill. Whenever possible use the youths' own experiences as examples.

See Leader's Guide for discussion of Partner System. The Partners encourage the young people to turn to one another for help.

FOURTH SESSION

Improving Self-Esteem

Time	Activity	Notes
	SETTING THE STAGE	
	Arrive a few minutes before the session starts.	
	Review the skills, discussion questions, and problem situations.	
	Prepare the Partner List.	
	Have participants who arrive early help set up the room.	
10 min.	GETTING STARTED	
	As everyone gets settled, ask about the week's skill practice. If any of the participants had trouble using the skills, take time to discuss or demonstrate the situation they describe and let the group help to figure out how the situation could be handled differently.	
	If you use an ice breaker, use one that deals with self-esteem, such as "I'm Proud Because..."	See Leader's Guide.
70 min.	MAIN ACTIVITY	
Opening Discussion	Ask the youths if they always feel the same way about themselves. What happens to change the way they feel? Concentrate first on what makes them feel good about themselves. Then discuss what can happen to damage their self-esteem.	See Leader's Guide for additional notes.
	At the end of the presentation, ask the youths how they feel about themselves today and why.	
Skill Presentation	Present the two self-esteem skills and ask the youths to suggest learning steps for the skills: 1. Improving how you feel about yourself. 2. Helping others to feel better about themselves.	
	Use the five learning steps: 1. What do you want to learn? 2. Why is it important to learn this skill? 3. What are the steps to using the skill? 4. How can the skill be practiced? 5. Was the skill done correctly?	Detailed descriptions of each skill are in the Leader's Guide.
Applying the Skill	Try a paper and pencil exercise. Have the youths write positive statements about others and then themselves. Have them discuss the problem situations in the Leader's Guide.	

10 min.

WRAPPING UP

Ask each of the youths to use the Participant Notebook exercises to measure their self-esteem several times in the coming week. Renew the Partner agreements. The Partners should discuss their progress with the self-esteem exercises.

The end of the group is approaching, and this is a good time to talk about planning an additional activity. The youths should do the planning. The leader's role is to oversee the plans.

Participants may contact their previous Partners, but should also be assigned a new one. The point of the system is to increase contact between the young people.

Working together to plan a picnic or hike is a good way for friendships to start, a key feature of a Youth Helping Youth group.

FIFTH SESSION

Avoiding Conflict

Time	Activity	Notes
	SETTING THE STAGE	
	Arrive a few minutes before the session starts.	
	Review the skills, discussion questions, and problem situations.	
	Prepare a new Partner List.	
	Have participants who arrive early help set up the room.	
10 min.	GETTING STARTED	
	As everyone is getting settled ask how the practice from the previous week went.	
	If you use an ice breaker, use one that deals with conflict. "Millionaire" is a good one to try.	
70 min.	MAIN ACTIVITY	
Opening Discussion	Ask the youths to give examples of conflicts, arguments, or fights they have had recently. List about 10 examples on the flip chart. Put a star next to the conflicts contributed to by the youths. Put an exclamation point beside any of the conflicts that had a positive outcome. Put a check mark next to the conflicts the youths feel could have been avoided.	The Leader's Guide has additional notes.
Skill Presentation	Skills that can help reduce conflict and avoid angry confrontation are: 1. Responding to criticism 2. Admitting mistakes 3. Standing up for yourself Sometimes conflict begins when we feel we are criticized unfairly. Criticism usually comes in two different forms: 1. It is a factual evaluation. 2. It is an evaluation that is not factual and is given with the intention of causing hurt or embarrassment. Unfortunately, most criticism, even if it is the first kind feels like the second. When we feel hurt or embarrassed, we tend to get angry and we then may end up in a conflict that gets out of control. Ask for a volunteer to describe the skill using the learning steps. 1. What skill is to be learned? 2. Why is learning this skill important? 3. What are the steps to using the skill?	The Leader's Guide has learning steps for the skills.

4. How can the skill be practiced?
5. Was the skill done correctly?

Discuss the other two skills.

Applying the
Skill

You may divide the group into practice or discussion pairs. Have the pairs report back to the group on the most difficult parts of the skills to carry out.

The Leader's Guide suggests problem situations, but this should be a topic about which the youths can speak from experience.

10 min.

WRAPPING UP

Have everyone think about situations in the coming week when they might be able to use the skills. Assign new Partners to everyone. Continue any discussion that is in progress about an ending party or activity.

If the youths get into arguments or fights or successfully avoid them, they can discuss what went wrong or right with their Partners.

SIXTH SESSION

Putting It All Together

Time	Activity	Notes
	SETTING THE STAGE Arrive a few minutes before the session starts. Review the closing discussion and activities. Have participants who arrive early help set up the room.	
5 min.	GETTING STARTED Allow time for everyone to greet one another and talk about the past week, but don't run an ice breaker exercise. There will be an ending exercise instead.	
60 min.	MAIN ACTIVITY By this time, the participants should be ready to discuss how to use the skills they have learned in many situations. List the skills that have been presented in the past five weeks. Have each youth take one of the skills and describe how it could be used at home, in school, or with friends. Ask them to relate how they have used the skill successfully. Ask the group members how they could help each other continue to practice the skills. What is the payoff or reward to them for using the skills? An option to a full group discussion is to divide the youths into discussion pairs or trios to focus on one skill and relate it to different situations. The small groups could then demonstrate the skill to the whole group.	See Leader's Guide for additional notes. If you have focused on the youths' experiences in applying skills, you may go back to the Leader's Guide and use problem situations from earlier sessions for the demonstrations.
25 min.	WRAPPING UP After the discussion has wound down, ask the participants to regroup in a circle. Have each youth take one of the slips of paper. (Include yourself.) Ask for a volunteer to start by completing the sentence on his or her slip of paper. If there is enough time, have everyone choose again and complete a different sentence.	Before the session prepare several slips of paper with the following statements: "In this group I learned..." "In this group I enjoyed..." "In this group I was surprised..." "Because of this group I plan to change..."

Ask each youth to fill out the evaluation form included in the Participant Notebook. This is the last session and you may have some ideas or can ask for suggestions about how to extend the benefits of the group. The group may decide to:

1. Pick Partners one more time.
2. Agree to meet again in one month and share how everyone is doing with their practice of skills.

Take time to discuss these and other suggestions and then come to an agreement of what the group will do.

Have the youths stand up and say goodbye (hugs, handshakes) to each other and the leader.

Being part of a group can become very important to some of the youths who may feel sadness or even grief over the end of the experience. Plan additional contact with those who are feeling a real sense of loss.

AFTER THE LAST SESSION

Read all the evaluations. Summarize them and your observations of the success of the group in a short report that will go to the group sponsor. Note which skills seemed most relevant to the youths. An evaluation of the group might be helpful for the child protective services agency in your community and might encourage other organizations to sponsor groups.

Decide what type of follow-up you want to have with each of the participants and carry it through.

Introducing Yourself and Shaking Hands

1. Look the other person in the eye.
2. Offer your hand first. (Don't wait!)
3. Say your name clearly (first and last).
4. Shake hands firmly. (Even if your hands are cold or wet, the nice firm grip makes up for it.)
5. Ask for the other person's name. ("And your name is?")

Exercise

Is there someone at school you'd like to meet? When and how could you introduce yourself to this person? Do it!

Doing What You Are Told

1. Look at the person telling you to do something.
2. Think about what you have been told to do. Is it something you can and should do?
3. If it is something you can do, tell the person you understand and do the task right away. If you don't understand, ask politely for more information.
4. If it is something you can't or shouldn't do, tell the person you will not be able to do what he or she asked. Explain why in a calm voice, ask for help, or ask for different instructions.

Exercise

When is it easy for you to do what someone tells you?

Can you think of times when it was hard to do what you were told?

Apologizing

1. Think about what you want to say you are sorry for.
2. Decide what you want to say:
 "I'm sorry, I didn't listen."
 "I'm sorry, I forgot to do that for you."
3. Figure out the best time to apologize. (The sooner, the better! The longer you wait, the harder it is to do.)
4. Find the other person and apologize. Remember to look him or her in the eye.

Exercise

Do you remember when someone apologized to you? How did you feel?

Do you remember a time when you apologized to someone else? What did you say? How did you feel?

Giving Compliments

1. Find times when other people look nice or do something special for you.
2. Figure out what you want to say:
"I liked the way you talked in the group today."
"That was a great catch you made in the first inning."
"You really helped me out by letting me borrow your book."
"You're a good person to talk to."
3. Look the other person in the eye. Tell him or her what they did and why you liked it.

Accepting Compliments

1. Look the other person in the eye.
2. Listen to what he or she is saying. Don't interrupt!
3. Say "Thanks." Don't reject or put down nice things that are said about you.

Exercise

Did someone say something nice about you recently? What did you say?
Did you think you deserved it? How did you feel?

Think of a compliment you can give to someone today. What will you say? When will you say it?

Identifying Your Feelings

1. Feel what is happening to your body. (Is your face red? Do you have a lump in your throat? Are there tears in your eyes? Are you breathing fast? Can you feel your heart beating?)
2. Think about what has happened to you that might make you feel this way.
3. Try to find the right name for your feeling. (Are you angry, sad, afraid, happy, surprised, hurt, lonely?)

Exercise

How did you feel the last time...

You looked at yourself in the mirror?

You got your report card?

You had a fight with your mother or father?

Your friends invited you to a party?

Your high school basketball team won a game?

Recognizing Feelings in Others

1. Watch other people to see how they look and move. (Do they have red eyes, slumped shoulders? Are they walking quickly or slowly? Are they laughing, shouting, frowning, crying, smiling?)
2. Try to figure out what happened to make them look or move that way.
3. Find a name for what they are feeling — worried, happy, sad, lonesome, angry.

Exercise

Your friend crosses the street and a car just misses hitting him. He swears at the driver. Is he feeling anger or something else?

Your mother comes home from work. You ask how her day went. She doesn't answer but yells at you for not hanging up your coat or putting your school books away. What is your mother feeling?

Handling Your Feelings

1. Think about what you are feeling and what is happening to your body.
2. Figure out different ways of showing how you feel: talking about it with a friend or parent, writing in your diary, going for a long walk or run, getting into a fight, crying, hitting someone.
3. Think about what might happen if you did each of these things.
4. Decide what the best thing to do is and then do it.

Exercise

Describe what happened the last time you got really upset or angry. Why were you angry? Were you feeling anything besides anger? What did you do? Could you have done something different that might have been better for you?

Improving How You Feel About Yourself

1. Take 10 minutes every day and think about the good things you've done: studying for a test, doing a chore at home, helping a friend, lending your brother or sister some money.
2. Don't think negative thoughts:
 "I'm no good at"
 "I should have"
 "I probably can't"
3. Tell yourself that you're a pretty nice person.
4. Figure out one or two things you will do for yourself or others tomorrow.

Exercise

For the next week, make up and fill in a chart like this for yourself every day.

GOOD THINGS I DID TODAY:

GOOD THINGS I WILL DO TOMORROW:

Helping Others Feel Better About Themselves

1. Listen to what people say about themselves.
2. When they put themselves down, don't agree.
3. Look for times to say something nice to them. Tell them how much you like them or what they do for you and others.
4. Practice talking about positive things when you are with other people.

Exercise

Do you know people who are always putting themselves down? Do you like to be around them?

What could you do or say today to help someone in your family feel better about themselves?

Responding to Criticism

1. Look at the person who is saying something critical about you or something you did.
2. Listen to what is being said.
3. Think about what is being said. Do you understand why you are being criticized?
4. Don't pout, swear, or criticize back.
5. If the criticism is fair, take it calmly and figure out how to change things.
6. If the criticism is not fair, say in a calm voice that you don't agree or count to ten and walk away.

Exercise

Think about some criticism you received in the past. How did you feel about it? Did you get angry or feel hurt? Would there have been a better way to handle the criticism?

Admitting Mistakes

1. Think about the mistake you made. Don't make excuses or blame someone else.
2. Remember that **everyone** makes mistakes.
3. Think about ways you can fix the mistake.
4. Decide who needs to know about the mistake. Tell them about it and do what you can to correct the mistake.

Exercise

Think about a time when you made a mistake. Did you tell anyone about it? Did you do anything to fix it? Was there something else you could have done?

Standing Up for Yourself

1. Think about what others are expecting, asking, or saying of you.
2. Is what they say or want right or wrong?
3. If they are wrong, decide what you should say and do: Should you ignore them? Should you say no? Should you ask if you can do something else instead?
4. Whatever you decide, do it calmly. Don't get angry, pout, or insult the other person.

Exercise

Have there been times when you wished you had stood up for yourself — when someone asked you to do something that was wrong, blamed you for something you didn't do, or insulted you? Can you think of other times when you stood up for yourself by keeping your cool but saying what you had to say?

Did This Group Help You?

1. Did the group help you? How?
2. What did you enjoy most?
3. What activities did you like the least?
4. What did you like most about the group leader?
5. What are some things the group leader could do better?
6. Would you recommend the group to a friend? Why or why not?